

LINES FOR EMILY MINE OWN

Written after a reading of Shelley's Epsychidion

Weep not for my heart or its sorry little art;  
It is grand to fail so well.  
The little Heaven though in its even  
Is worth far more than Hell.  
To you, dear Margo, I write this poem,  
Considering it less than a suitable home  
For all that I wish to say;  
It resembles not night, but nor is it day.  
You are the soul of my soul,  
I am the part of which you are the whole,  
And when in these paltry words I tell  
The mystery of my love's hell,  
You will possess the honored claim  
That it is for your love my love does aim.

I bring upon you agony,  
To which you scorn its mystery;  
The mystery is nothing new,  
All I'd say is I love you,  
But, of course, I fail.  
I am only the boat, you are the sail.

Do not listen to this pretense,  
Do not breath this low incense;  
There are no sacraments with which to tell the difference  
Between what I say and its meaning.  
The higher the edifice the more is its leaning.

Celebration stirs in the air.  
The air is limp there.  
Truth somehow eludes the truthful,  
Beauty scorns only the beautiful.  
Still there are things I would write  
If only they'd kiss and not bite.  
Emily was imprisoned in the house of God,  
But I am not Shelley; I acknowledge the sod,  
I know no matter what I may say,  
The words are the words from the clay.  
Margo, I know you can hear me, but listen!  
Tears sometimes fall but don't glisten.

In the end you may be the Moon;  
But the end will not happen so soon.  
Woe is me! I am inclined to shout,  
But rather I'm tempted to turn it about.  
For whoever the woe is, perhaps it will rest  
Some other time too, not when head is on breast.  
The tower you stay in is only your own:  
By the time it is opened I may be gone.